Dear Lord Trefgarne,

I’m writing to you on behalf of the British Lung Foundation ahead of the committee’s consideration of the proposed legislation to tackle emissions from Medium Combustion Plants (MCPs) and generators. We urge you and your fellow committee members to support this amendment to help tackle the UK’s air pollution crisis.

Breathing in toxic pollution increases all our chances of getting lung cancer, it can worsen symptoms for people who have a lung condition and it can stunt the growth of children’s lungs. Millions of people living in our towns and cities are breathing in levels of air pollution that could be damaging their health and even shortening their lives.¹

Traffic emissions make up the majority of roadside emissions in our towns and cities, but outside these areas, emissions from other sources can be higher - such as those from energy generation, combustion and industry.² In recent years there has been a rapid growth in the number of low-cost and small-scale power generators. These generators are often run on harmful diesel which emits high levels of nitrogen oxides (NOx) yet are subject to few restrictions.

This proposed legislation is urgently required to regulate generators and MCPs to deliver a significant improvement in air quality. It’s been estimated that this amendment could provide a 9% reduction in particulate matter emissions and a 22% reduction in NOx emissions. This will also improve air quality in towns and cities which will help achieve the targets set out in the government’s air quality plan.

We recognise that many of these generators are situated in hospitals and it is a difficult time for NHS finances, however the costly health impacts of air pollution far outweigh the potential revenue from increased use of these generators. Additionally, some of the patients in these hospitals will benefit the most from cleaner air because of their vulnerability to toxic emissions. That’s why we welcome this legislation as an important step towards cleaning up the air we breathe and protecting all our lung health.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Penny Woods
Chief executive
British Lung Foundation

² Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2016) *Air Pollution in the UK 2015* p.19